

STATE OF UTAH

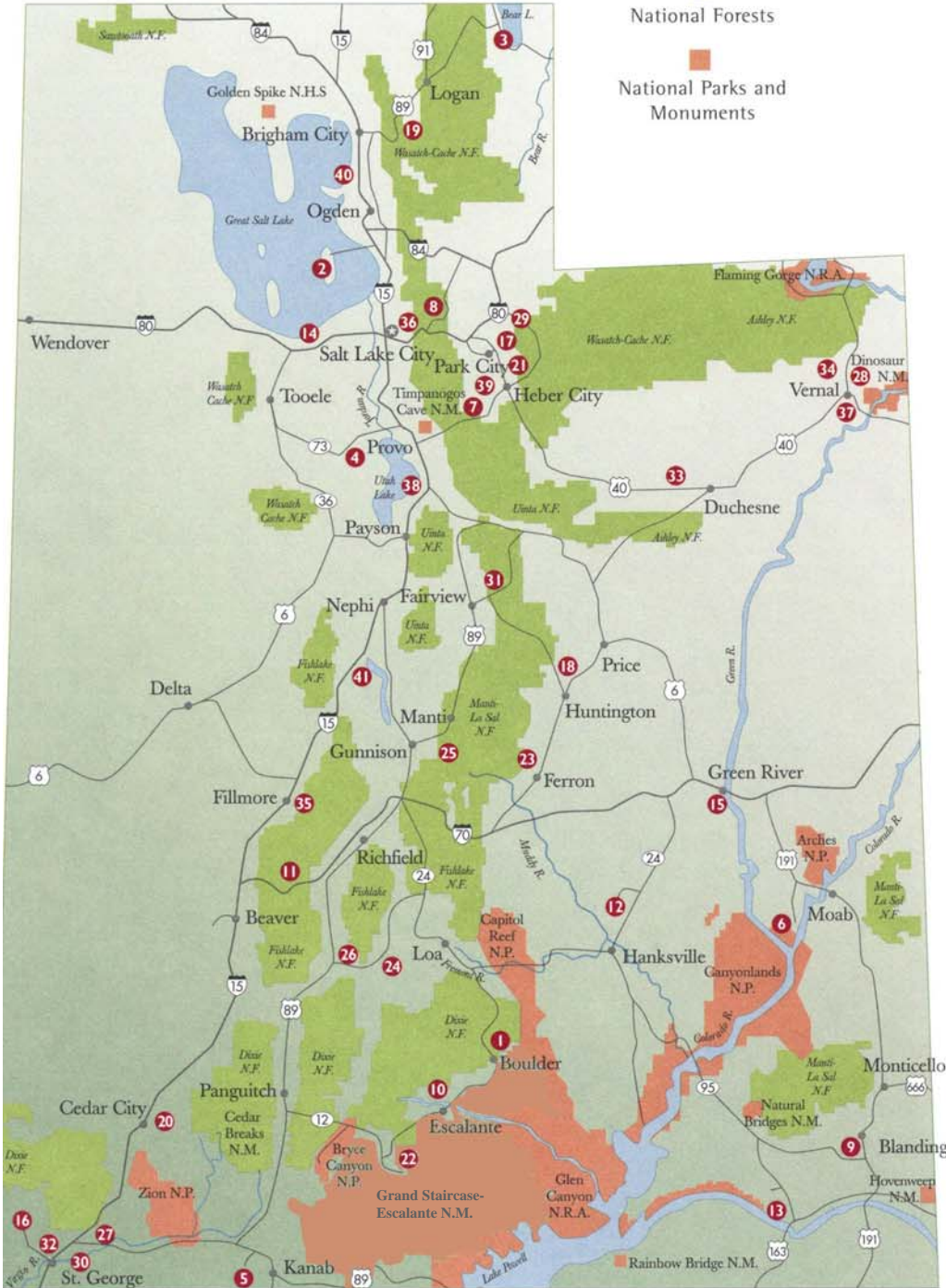
DIVISION OF STATE PARKS AND RECREATION



VISION 2010
STRATEGIC PLAN
DECEMBER 2004

Utah

State Parks Locations



Statewide programs

- Boating Program
- Off-Highway Vehicle Program
- Recreational Trails Program



Goblin Valley State Park

"The trail is the thing, not the end of the trail."
- Louis L'Amour

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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From the Director of Utah State Parks. . .



I am proud to present Vision 2010, A Strategic Plan for the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation. This five-year road map addresses many issues we expect to face during the next five years.

Vision 2010 was started in February 2004 by a team consisting of board members, division leadership, staff, and citizen representatives. The planning process created significant discussion about what the agency was doing, what it should be doing and where it should be going. What was derived from the process is a road map, if you will, a guide with goals, strategies and action items for the agency leadership, staff, and the Board of Utah State Parks and Recreation to work toward over the next five years.

During the development of this plan, several long discussions ensued about our vision statement. Our new vision statement provides a descriptive picture of who we want to be as an agency in the future. The vision provides stakeholders with assurance of professional goals, better public service, more efficient operations and also stands to remind all of us about our responsibility as stewards, resource managers, and employees of the State of Utah.

I am personally very excited about the completion of the plan and look forward to its implementation. Our staff is engaged and ready to move forward.

Thank you for your support of Utah's great state parks.

Mary Tullius

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Historic Union Pacific Rail Tail State Park

"If bread is the first necessity of life, recreation is a close second."

- Edward Bellamy

Executive Summary



A Mandate

The Utah Legislature created the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation in 1957 to be the recreational authority

for the state. The Division currently manages 41 state parks and three statewide programs (boating, off-highway vehicle and non-motorized trails). The legislature also directed Utah State Parks to formulate *“...a long-range, comprehensive plan and program for the acquisition, planning, protection, operation, maintenance, development, and wise use of areas of scenic beauty, recreational utility, historic, archaeological or scientific interest, to the end that the health, happiness, recreational opportunities and wholesome enjoyment of life of the people may be further encouraged ...”* The last strategic plan was completed in 1996 and is now dated. This new plan meets the management needs of the Division and the mandate of the state legislature.

A Team Process: In February 2004, a team consisting of Utah state park employees, members of the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation’s citizen governing board and the general public was chartered to draft a new strategic plan for the Division.

The team:

- Developed new mission and vision statements for the Division including 14 guiding principles and values.
- Identified issues currently impacting the Division and issues expected to do so in the next few years.
- Produced a list of goals, objectives and strategies for dealing with those issues.

The goals, objectives and strategies are at the heart of this plan, which is expected to guide the Division through the challenges of the next five to ten years. This plan will help the Division meet its commitment as the state’s recreation authority, to operate and maintain the state park system, and to manage programs that enhance recreation throughout the state.

MISSION

Provide opportunities to improve the quality of life in Utah through parks, programs and employees serving the public

VISION

Utah State Parks and Recreation accomplishes its mission by adhering to the following principles and values:

- ⚓ Securing the resources necessary to adequately maintain and operate the state parks and programs
- ⚓ Balancing recreation, resource protection and preservation through effective stewardship
- ⚓ Promoting safety and protection for people, property and the environment
- ⚓ Supplying high-quality and affordable experiences
- ⚓ Providing adequate, safe and well-maintained facilities
- ⚓ Being customer sensitive
- ⚓ Recognizing our role in enhancing the recreational estate in Utah by maximizing existing capacities at recreation sites, appropriate system expansion and partnerships with other recreation providers
- ⚓ Fostering an appreciation for natural and cultural resources through education and interpretation
- ⚓ Using innovative, effective and efficient practices
- ⚓ Training and empowering employees to serve the public
- ⚓ Recognizing that our employees are a valuable resource
- ⚓ Recognizing state parks as a key component of local communities
- ⚓ Being honest, ethical and complying with all applicable laws, regulations, rules and guidelines
- ⚓ Working effectively with external partners

Influences on the Division of State Parks and Recreation

- Utah's population is expected to increase by more than 700,000 people during the next ten years. Utah's ethnic and minority populations are expected to grow, increasing the State's diversity.
- With the baby boomer generation reaching senior citizen status during the next ten years, the average age of the State's citizens is expected to become older.
- The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment indicated that participation in the most popular recreational activities increased by an average of 27 percent between 1995 and 2001 (see table on page 11). This trend is expected to continue.
- These increases in demand for recreation are happening in a time when the budgets of recreation providers are being cut. ***The budget of the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation has been reduced by more than \$8 million in one time and ongoing cuts since fiscal year 2001.*** Its general fund appropriation (in constant dollars) is now at the same level as in 1995.

Utah State Parks recognizes these trends and is committed to manage its resources accordingly. This plan addresses both the increasing demand for recreation and the need for adequate funding to operate the state park system.

Benefits of Outdoor Recreation Provided by the Division

The benefits of the recreation opportunities provided by the Division are becoming more recognized. An important element of this plan is educating stakeholders about the benefits of the State's parks and recreation resources.

- The tourism and recreation industry is very important to Utah's economy, accounting for one in every 11 jobs in the state and providing \$314 million annually in state and local taxes. Utah state park visitors spend between \$67 and \$90 million annually on goods and services relating to their visits.
- Utah state parks promote healthier lifestyles that reduce healthcare costs.
- Parklands, open space and trails of the types provided by the Division, have a positive effect on communities through enhancement of real estate values, business production and revenue, and providing safe transportation corridors and linkages between neighborhoods, schools and attractions.



Hyrum State Park

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

This strategic plan is built around four broad goals, with corresponding objectives and strategies. The achievement of the plan's goals, objectives and strategies will advance the mission and vision of the Division. The complete list of the plan's recommendations is found later in this document. The following is a summarized version.

Goal 1. The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will develop marketing plans and programs to enhance the Division's contribution to Utah's economy.

Objective 1. Utah State Parks will lead efforts to increase the impact of tourism and recreation on local and state economies.

- The Division will team with other private, local, state and federal travel and economic development entities to develop programs and marketing plans that identify specific tourism interest segments and create travel routes and itineraries that encourage people to visit multiple areas of the state to engage in their activity of interest.
- The Division will seek to enhance its economic contribution by developing diverse, high quality experiences that attract or lengthen the stay of residents and visitors.
- The Division will develop and implement plans to increase visitation to Utah state parks and maximize the use of existing facilities through effective informational, promotional and outreach activities.
- The Division has many parks and facilities that are at capacity during peak times, and some facilities that are underutilized. The Division will promote lesser-used facilities, along with non-peak times at busier facilities to maximize the utilization of parks.

Objective 2: The Division will actively seek partnerships and concession opportunities for the private sector in the state park system.

- The Division will encourage appropriate private sector enterprises in parks through concession agreements to provide services for park visitors that are outside of division expertise or mission.
- The Division will pursue mutually beneficial business partnerships with private interests.

Goal 2. The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will provide high-quality, safe and affordable recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities.

Objective 1. Utilize innovative, effective and efficient management practices.

- The Division will analyze park and section budgets in order to best allocate funds.
- Ensure that type and use of employees is appropriate and efficient.
- Maximize revenue collection to meet the yearly collection figure mandated by the legislature and to help fund parks and programs, while maintaining affordability of parks.
- Develop a contingency plan to be implemented if revenues fall, budgets continue to erode or are cut due to the economy or legislature.

Objective 2. Ensure that all park grounds, equipment and facilities are well maintained at a standardized level that enhances safety, maximizes equipment and facility lifespan, and meets public expectations.

- Parks will conduct annual Utah Division of Risk Management safety audits and participate in Division of Facilities Construction and Management maintenance audits, correcting any deficiencies in a timely manner.
- Each park will utilize a database program to inventory and track maintenance on all division-owned equipment.

Objective 3. Increase the role of interpretation and education in the management and operation of the Division's parks and programs.

- The Division will review and implement the recommendations listed in its interpretive plan and will develop interpretive plans for individual parks starting where the need is greatest.
- Funding will be allocated to parks to help them provide these important programs to visitors, communities and schools.

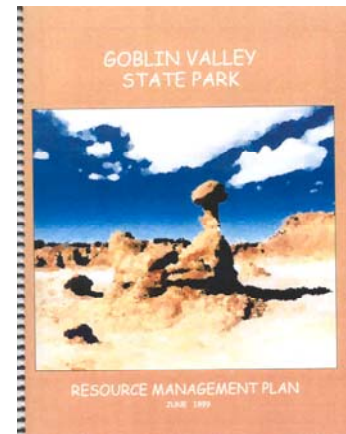
Objective 4. Provide organized and efficient public safety services at division locations and at off-park boating and off-highway vehicle areas to meet the needs of the public, state and division.

- A law enforcement coordinator position will be established to organize and coordinate all division public safety and law enforcement efforts, and develop a statewide law enforcement plan for the Division.

Goal 3. The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will protect, preserve, and appropriately enhance and expand Utah's recreational estate.

Objective 1. Provide park managers with the management tools they need to properly balance protection and use of park resources.

- Resource management plans will be developed or updated for each park to ensure consistent, planned management of park resources.
- A comprehensive review process will be implemented to evaluate impacts on resources from potential special uses and development projects.
- A database of significant documents will be developed to provide managers and others easy access to important resource, property and facility information.



Objective 2. Secure adequate funding to allow for effective stewardship of parks and programs.

- Restore funding cut from the Division's budget since 2001 for development and renovation projects and from division programs, such as the non-motorized trail program.
- Encourage the legislature to continue to fund annual matching monies for renovation and development grants.
- All new facilities and improvements should meet the standards outlined in the Division's *Park Site Evaluation System* and should come with ongoing operational funding so existing funding is not diluted.
- Proposed development projects should be prioritized by their ability to improve services and opportunities for visitors, enhance operational efficiency, increase revenue with minimal impact on operation, and improve facilities to meet public health and safety standards.
- To achieve these funding objectives, the Division will build strong relationships with partners and cooperators to foster support for operations and programs, and seek new sources for continuous ongoing funding.

Objective 3. Appropriately enhance and expand Utah's recreational estate.

- The Division will seek to enhance and expand recreational opportunities through appropriate growth in the state park system and by providing cooperation and support to other recreation providers.
- Adequately plan for the increasing numbers of off-highway vehicle owners and their recreation needs.

Goal 4. The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled and committed workforce within Utah State Parks.

Objective 1. Develop employees' skills through regular training, performance contracting, communication, and coordination.

- Employees will be given job-appropriate training and mentoring to improve skills.
- Supervisors will clearly identify and communicate duties and expectations to employees.
- Career paths for each job series will be outlined and explained to employees.

Objective 2. Provide adequate and competitive compensation to employees to improve recruitment and retention.

- Ensure that division employees are compensated at levels that are adequate for their duties and workload, consistent with similar positions in other agencies within Utah state government, and positions in other states competing for workers.

Objective 3. Determine staffing levels necessary to operate each park and section adequately and efficiently.

- Staffing plans will be developed that identify the number and types of staff necessary to operate the parks and sections adequately and efficiently.

Objective 4. Improve overall satisfaction levels of all employees to improve performance and employee retention.

- The Division will identify and correct causes contributing to low morale and job dissatisfaction and will fund and implement an employee recognition and incentive program to reward good work.



Dead Horse Point State Park

Though many elements of this plan can be implemented without additional monies, the Division must be successful in obtaining increased funding to fully accomplish the plan's goals and



Scofield State Park

objectives. A separate detailed work plan identifies specific actions to be taken by division employees, and others, to accomplish the objectives and strategies identified in this plan.



Willard Bay State Park





Introduction

Where do we go from here?

The strategies described in this plan form a blueprint of actions to be taken by the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation to meet their commitment as the state's recreation authority, to operate and maintain the state park system, and to manage programs that enhance recreation throughout the state.

This document will guide the Division through challenges for the next five to ten years. As you will see, the plan shows an emphasis on managing parks to protect their resources for future generations, while finding ways to increase the number and diversity of recreational opportunities for Utah's growing population and tourism industry. By partnering with other recreation providers, and by providing assistance through staff expertise and the Division's statewide programs, Utah State Parks will help the recreation estate grow to meet the needs of Utah's increasing citizen and visitor population.

This plan is built around four primary goals:

-  **GOAL 1.** To develop marketing plans and programs to enhance the Division's contribution to Utah's economy.
-  **GOAL 2.** To provide high-quality, safe, and affordable recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities.
-  **GOAL 3.** To protect, preserve, and appropriately enhance and expand Utah's recreational estate.
-  **GOAL 4.** To recruit, select, develop, empower, and retain highly committed and satisfied employees.


Specific objectives and strategies further define each of the goals. The goals, objectives and strategies found later in this document are not listed in priority order. All of these items are deemed important in the long term.

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-  Recognizing that our employees are a valuable resource
-  Recognizing state parks as a key component of local communities
-  Being honest, ethical and complying with all applicable laws, regulations, rules and guidelines
-  Working effectively with external partners

A Mandate

Utah State Parks and Recreation was created in 1957, making Utah the 48th state

"The Division of Parks and Recreation shall be the parks and recreation authority for the state of Utah"
-Utah Code 63-11-17.1

to create a state park system. At that time, four parks were established and a park commission was created and charged with the responsibility of inventorying the state for other potential state park areas. The state legislature directed the commission to make "...an overall careful survey of much of Utah's park and recreation potential, with field investigation of many areas, and sites of scenic, historic, archaeological and geologic interest."

The commission completed their survey in 1959, identifying 118 potential state park sites. In 1967, the parks commission was dissolved and the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation was formed within the newly established Department of Natural Resources. The Division of State Parks and Recreation was to be governed by an eight-member citizen board. According to Utah Code 63-11-17, "The board shall have power to (1) establish the policies best designed to accomplish the objectives and purposes set out in this act; (2) make regulations governing the use of the state park system."



Wasatch Mountain State Park

for safe boating on Utah's lakes, reservoirs and rivers. The Division's boating program offers boater education courses and enforcement of laws and regulations. An all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile program educates users about laws and rules, and promotes safety and protection for people, property and the environment. State Parks oversees statewide motorized and non-motorized trail programs, a recreation grants program, large law enforcement program, and state park reservation system.

Currently, the Utah state park system has 41 state parks of three types: recreation, heritage and scenic. They are found throughout the state in mountain valleys, desert canyons and mesa tops, and in proximity to many of the state's cities and towns. The Division also manages several statewide programs. The Division has primary authority



Snowmobiling in Utah

Why Plan?

Within intent language found in Utah Code 63-11-13, the Utah Legislature directed the Board of State Parks and Recreation to “formulate” and “put into execution,” “...a long-range, comprehensive plan and program for the acquisition, planning, protection, operation, maintenance, development, and wise use of areas of scenic beauty, recreational utility, historic, archaeological or scientific interest, to the end that the health, happiness, recreational opportunities and wholesome enjoyment of life of the people may be further encouraged within the general policies of the Department of Natural Resources.” In addition to the legislative mandate, the Division creates plans to serve the citizens of the state by protecting and preserving resources, setting goals for the management and operation of parks, and providing adequate recreational opportunities. State Parks has completed several long-range plans over the years. The last, *Frontiers 2000, A System Plan to Guide the Division into the 21st Century*, was completed in 1996.

In early 2005, the state will have a new governor, and the Department of Natural Resources and Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation may both have new directors. Also, the Board of Utah State Parks and Recreation has several new members and is expected to experience a change of leadership in 2005. During the past few years, the Division has faced challenging economic times, while experiencing growth in recreation demand, such as the rapid increase in off-highway vehicle

(OHV) use. Due to these factors and the length of time since the last long-range plan, division managers felt that a new long-range strategic plan was needed. This plan meets these needs. It identifies issues that are expected to be of concern in the next five to ten years. It includes goals, objectives and strategies to deal with the issues identified. Implementation of this plan will ensure that the Division progresses in a proactive and planned way, despite changes in leadership and other influences.



Antelope Island State Park



The new Utah Field House of Natural History State Park Museum in Vernal; building design by AJC Architects won the Utah Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Merit Award

The Planning Process

The Director of Utah State Parks chartered a team in February 2004 to develop the strategic plan. Team members included division section and program managers, field staff, State Parks Board members, and the general public. The Division's planning staff facilitated the team's efforts.

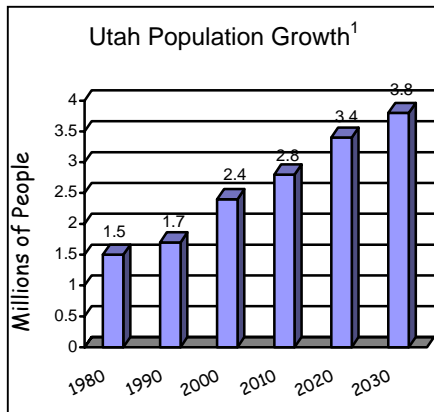
The Team:

- Developed new mission and vision statements for the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation. These new statements, although similar to past mission and vision statements, better describe organizational values and principles meant to guide State Parks into the future.
- Polled division employees to find out what they thought were the most important issues affecting their work units and Utah State Parks.
- Considered information from many sources to create a list of issues that they felt would impact the Division in the next five to ten years.
- Organized those issues into four broad goals and developed objectives and strategies for each goal to address the identified issues. These goals, objectives and strategies are the basis for this plan.
- Completed a work plan with specific measures for division employees, the governing board, and citizen advisory councils to complete to implement the strategies in this plan.

Changing Face of Population and Recreation

Demographic and economic trends have direct impacts on the Division's resources. It is important that park and program managers recognize these trends and respond to them to better serve the citizens of the state.

Utah has experienced significant growth in population in recent years. Population projections indicate that this growth will continue. According to the 2000 census, the population of Utah increased from 1.7 million in 1990, to 2.2 million in 2000. In 2003, the population of the state was estimated to be 2.4 million; a 7% increase from 2000.¹ By 2015, the population is expected to reach 3.1 million.



Utah is the state with the highest percent of its population 17 years and younger (30.8% in 2002). The youth segment of the state's population is expected to decrease by 3% through 2015, while the number of citizens 40 years and older is expected to increase by 5%.² This reflects the national trend of aging baby boomers. By 2030, the population 40 years and older in Utah is expected to reach 41% of the state's total population, an increase from 32% in 2000. Recreation providers will need to be aware of this trend, and will need to adjust, to meet the needs of the aging population.

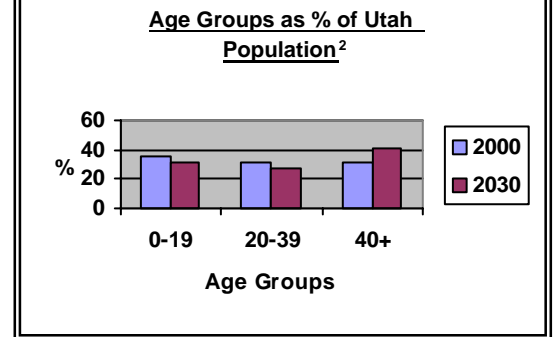
Approximately 80% of Utah citizens live in the Greater Wasatch Area (GWA), that stretches from Brigham City to Nephi (north to south) and from Kamas to Grantsville (east to west). This makes Utah the sixth most urban state in the nation. The GWA is currently home to an estimated 1.7 million residents. By 2020, the population of the GWA is expected to be 2.7 million.³

Ethnic and minority populations in Utah are expected to grow from an estimated 11.7% of the total population of the state, to 12.8% of the total in 2005, and 14.5% in 2015.⁴ Hispanics are the largest ethnic or minority group in the state making up 6.3% of the state's total population in 2000. Their numbers are expected to increase by approximately 52% over the next 10 years. Asians/Pacific Islanders are the second largest ethnic or minority group in Utah. Their numbers are also expected to increase at a similar rate, rising from 2.8% of the population to 3.5% in ten years.

To best serve the citizens of Utah, it is important that Utah State Parks attempts to reach all population sectors in the state, including minority and ethnic populations. The Division will need to conduct research into the recreational needs of these groups to be able to provide appropriate opportunities.

Influences on the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation

- ▶ *Utah's population is expected to grow by more than 700,000 people in the next ten years*
- ▶ *As a result of the aging baby boomer generation, Utah's population is getting older*
- ▶ *Overall participation in recreation activities increased 27% from 1995 to 2001*
- ▶ *Utah State Parks' budget has been cut by more than \$8 million since 2001*



Outdoor recreation demand has increased considerably in recent years. The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment showed large increases in participation in the most popular recreational activities between 1995 and 2001 (an average of 27%).⁵ These activities include walking for pleasure, family gatherings, visiting a beach or waterside, visiting nature centers, picnicking, visiting historic sites, viewing wildlife, and swimming in natural waters. Utah State Parks and Recreation is an important provider of these recreational activities, and hosts more than five million visitors each year.

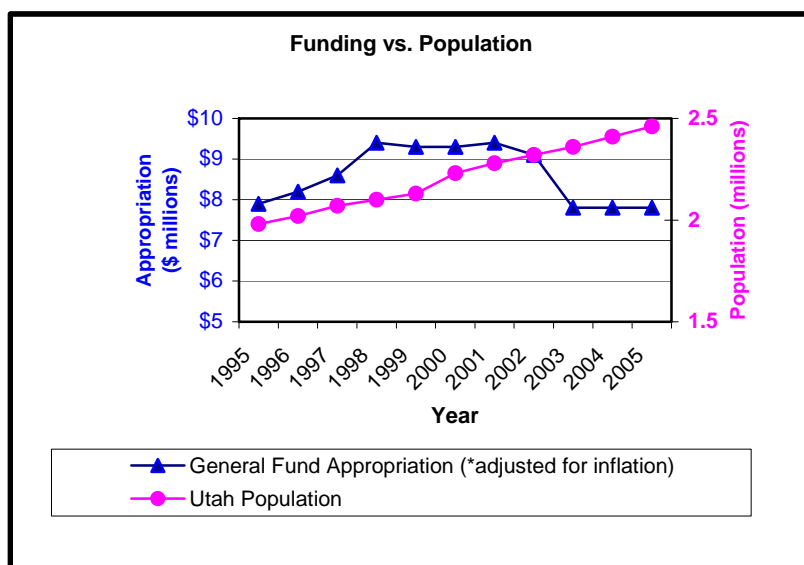
Ten Most Popular Activities in the U.S. in 2000-01 and 1994-95

(National Survey on Recreation and the Environment)

| Activities | Rank Order of Popularity in 2000-01 | Rank Order of Popularity in 1994-95 | Millions of Participants in 2000-01 | Millions of Participants in 1994-95 | Growth in Millions of Participants |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Walking for pleasure | 1 | 1 | 177.0 | 130.7 | 46.3 |
| Family gatherings | 2 | 3 | 156.8 | 121.0 | 35.8 |
| Visiting a beach or waterside | 3 | 2 | 89.6 | 76.3 | 13.3 |
| Visiting nature centers | 4 | 8 | 122.3 | 90.9 | 31.4 |
| Picnicking | 5 | 5 | 116.5 | 96.0 | 20.5 |
| Sightseeing | 6 | 4 | 111.1 | 120.7 | -9.6 |
| Attending outdoor sports events | 7 | 7 | 106.4 | 101.3 | 5.1 |
| Visiting historic sites | 8 | 9 | 98.6 | 86.4 | 12.2 |
| Viewing wildlife | 9 | ** | 95.3 | 61.1 | 34.2 |
| Swimming in natural waters | 10 | 10 | 89.6 | 76.3 | 13.3 |

**Pool Swimming was number 6 in 1994-95, but has been replaced by viewing wildlife as one of the top ten in 2000-01.

In recent years, the budgets of public recreation providers have been reduced. The budget of the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation has been reduced by over \$8 million in onetime and ongoing cuts since fiscal year 2001. The Division's ongoing operational funds were cut by \$1.8 million. The Division's general fund appropriation (in constant dollars) is now at the same level as in 1995 (see graph below). Capital development budgets and the non-motorized trail grants programs have been cut by more than \$6.3 million. These cuts have led to the loss of at least ten permanent employees and many seasonal positions throughout the Division. The reduction in personnel and operating funding has affected all parks making it more difficult to provide services and maintain and protect resources and facilities. The statewide Non-motorized Trail Program has been cut from a high of more than \$1 million in fiscal year 2001 to just \$30,000 in 2005. This program, initiated in 1991, has provided communities and other recreation providers with matching grants, totaling more than \$12 million, to develop and enhance non-motorized recreational trails throughout the state. In spite of increasing demand for these funds and the opportunities they provide, budget cuts have virtually eliminated this program. The loss of development funding has postponed indefinitely the necessary renovation of aging facilities and the construction of much needed new amenities.



Recreation is More Important than Ever

The health and economic benefits of recreation are increasingly well known.

To Your Health

In the United States, the traditional view of health has shifted from a medical model that considers only absence of disease and life expectancy, to a more holistic model that emphasizes proactive health promotion and disease prevention strategies.⁶

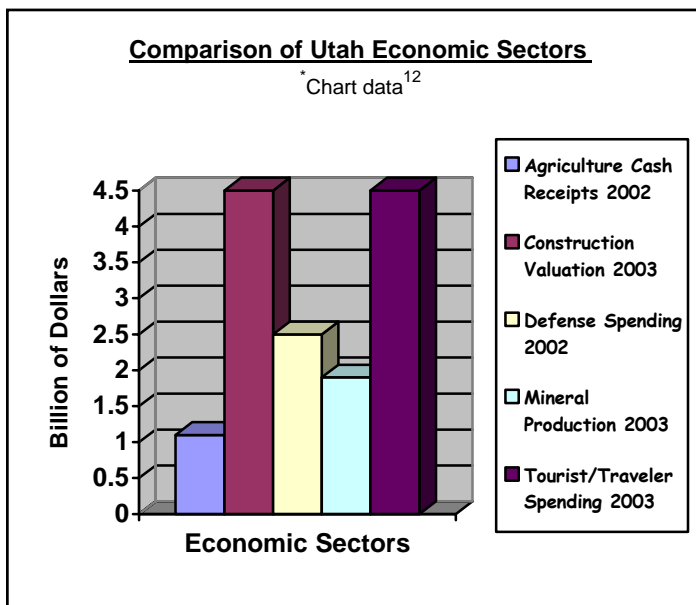
- 🏞️ The Center for Disease Control has indicated that regular exercise can reduce blood pressure, the risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart attack and colon cancer, symptoms of depression and anxiety, arthritis pain and disability, osteoporosis and falls, and can help with weight control.⁷
- 🏞️ It has been reported that about 70% of park visitors enjoyed a moderate to vigorous level of physical activity while visiting parks, and that the average visitor spent approximately half of his or her time walking while in parks.⁸
- 🏞️ In terms of overall health, park and recreation users reported fewer visits to a physician than did non-park users.⁸
- 🏞️ With health care service costs in the United States estimated at 12 to 15 percent of gross domestic product, parks and their associated health benefits could provide economic savings to citizens, in particular seniors.⁹
- 🏞️ With 75 million baby boomers turning 65 or older between 2010 and 2020, the possible reduction in health care costs and demands on the health care system from the active lifestyles that parks promote could be considerable.



Provo River Trail – funded in part by the Utah State Parks Non-motorized Recreational Trails Program

A Matter of Economics

The tourism and recreation industry is very important economically to both the nation and the state of Utah.



- 🏞️ In 2003, travel and tourism in the U.S. accounted for 6.5 million jobs, or 4.8% of total employment, and generated an estimated \$1.2 trillion, or 10.9 % of Gross Domestic Product.¹⁰
- 🏞️ During 2003, the tourism industry in Utah accounted for 107,500 jobs, or 10% of non-farm jobs (1 in every 11 jobs, overall). Travelers spent \$4.3 billion, producing \$341 million in local and state taxes.¹¹
- 🏞️ In 2003, Utah state parks attracted approximately five million visitors who spent between \$67 and \$90 million on goods and services related to their visits.¹³

Promoting Economic Growth

It has been shown that parks, trails and open space can have a positive effect on adjacent and surrounding property values.¹⁴ These recreation amenities also promote business growth and support community services. This can lead to increased property tax revenues and more dynamic local development and real estate markets. Parks and well-managed recreational trails can help local economies in other ways. They promote the establishment of clean businesses such as cafes, bait shops, bike shops and lodging.



Paiute ATV Trail

The Division's off-highway vehicle program helped to fund the Paiute ATV Trail System in central Utah. This trail system attracted 60,160 users to this largely rural area in 2001, and brought an estimated \$6 million to the four counties associated with the trail.¹⁵

Before development of the trail, the town of Marysvale had just seven business licenses. Today the town has 21 businesses, with most directly related to the Paiute Trail.

The non-motorized trail program has also had positive affects on communities. The program helps to fund walking, hiking, biking and equestrian trail development and maintenance throughout the state. It has funded projects that provide safe recreation and transportation routes that enhance real estate and business values.

An Impact Near You

A legislative mandate in 2002 led the Division to consider closing two parks in south-central Utah. At public meetings addressing the proposed closures, members of the communities surrounding the parks spoke out in opposition to the closures. In their testimony, community leaders indicated the closures would adversely affect many businesses that rely on the visitors to the park. In one community, the loss of park employees and their families would result in the closure of the community's public school because enrollment would drop below the level required to keep the school open.

Utah's state parks contribute to the creation of numerous jobs and income in local communities, particularly in small, isolated communities where the parks are recreational destination points. Park-related visitor spending from some of our state parks (Bear Lake for example) may account for more than one-third of total employment and income in adjacent towns.

"Our parks are precious and necessary. They are part of our economy...Central Utah has little in regards to employment or industry. Our industry is the Piute Trail and the state parks. If you close these our economy is in jeopardy."

-Public comment received regarding a proposed closure of Otter Creek and Piute State Parks

Looking to the Future

The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation realizes it has an important role to play in the health and well being of the citizens that it serves, and in the health of the economy of the state of Utah. Also, the Division recognizes its essential mission to manage and preserve the wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources entrusted to it. This plan attempts to identify and meet challenges by proactively establishing and achieving goals that best serve customers and resource management.



Otter Creek State Park



Green River State Park

***"It is in his pleasure
that a man really lives;
it is from his leisure
that he constructs the
true fabric of self. "***

- Agnes Repplier



Quail Creek State Park

“There is nothing in nature that can't be taken as a sign of both morality and invigoration. ”

- Gretel Ehrlich

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Achieving the following four goals, with their corresponding objectives and strategies, will advance the mission and vision of Utah State Parks, and will help the Division to meet the expected challenges of the next five to ten years. A separate work plan will be developed and implemented that will identify specific actions to be taken by division employees and others to accomplish the objectives and strategies identified below.

GOAL 1

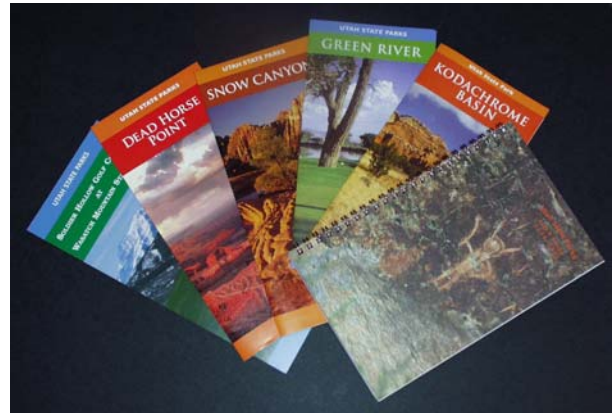
The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will develop marketing plans and programs to enhance the Division's contribution to Utah's economy.

The Division recognizes that it has responsibilities beyond providing recreation and protecting resources. It is an integral part of the state's economy and should seek to enhance state revenues where possible.

Objective 1: Utah State Parks will lead efforts to increase the impact of tourism and recreation on local and state economies.

Strategies to achieve Objective 1:

1. Team with other private, local, state and federal travel and economic development entities to develop programs and marketing plans that identify specific tourism interest segments and create travel routes and itineraries that encourage people to visit multiple areas of the state to engage in their activity of interest.
2. The Division will seek to enhance its economic contribution by developing diverse, high quality experiences that attract or lengthen the stay of residents and visitors.
3. Develop and implement plans to increase visitation to Utah state parks.
4. Maximize the use of existing facilities through effective informational, promotional and outreach activities. The Division has many parks and facilities that are at capacity during peak times, and some facilities that are underutilized. The Division will promote lesser-used facilities, along with non-peak times at busier facilities to maximize the utilization of parks.



Objective 2: The Division will actively seek partnerships and concession opportunities for the private sector in the state park system.

Strategies to achieve Objective 1:

1. The Division will encourage appropriate private sector enterprises through park concession agreements that provide services for park visitors that are outside of division expertise or mission. This will permit a number of private organizations to benefit from the public/private partnerships possible through these concession agreements, while allowing park visitors to enjoy enhanced recreational opportunities.
2. The Division will pursue mutually beneficial business partnerships with private interests.

GOAL 2

The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will provide high-quality, safe and affordable recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities.

State Parks must operate in an efficient manner to best serve the citizens of the state and to manage division resources. Allocated funds must be used in the most effective way possible, and revenues must be maximized while maintaining affordability to park users. All division facilities and grounds must be well maintained and safe for visitors and employees. The Division should maintain, and look for ways to enhance visitor experiences.

Objective 1: Utilize innovative, effective and efficient management practices.

Strategies to achieve Objective 1:

1. Analyze all park and section budgets, and prioritize division functions to decide where funds can most effectively be allocated.
2. Ensure that type and use of employees is appropriate and efficient.
3. Maximize revenue collection to meet the yearly collection figure mandated by the legislature and to help fund parks and programs, while maintaining affordability of parks.
4. Develop a contingency plan to be implemented if revenues fall, budgets continue to erode or are cut due to the economy or legislature (realizing that this will reduce services available to the public or require the closure of some parks).

Objective 2: Ensure that all park grounds, equipment and facilities are well maintained at a standardized level that enhances safety, maximizes equipment and facility lifespan, and meets public expectations.

Strategies to achieve Objective 2:

1. All parks will conduct annual Utah Division of Risk Management safety audits and will participate in annual Division of Facilities Construction and Management facility maintenance audits, correcting any deficiencies in a timely manner.
2. Parks will implement hazard inspection and mitigation programs to ensure the safety of visitors and staff members.
3. Division locations will utilize a database program to inventory and track maintenance on all division-owned equipment.



Renovation Project - Territorial Statehouse State Park Museum

Objective 3: To increase the role of interpretation and education in the management and operation of the Division's parks and programs.

Strategies to achieve Objective 3:

1. Review, update and execute the recommendations in the Division's interpretive plan. Implement interpretive best practices in the Division's parks. This will improve educational opportunities offered by state parks, and will ensure consistency throughout the Division.
2. Develop interpretive plans for individual parks, starting where need is the greatest. These plans will identify goals and objectives for interpreting the parks' resources to the public, and will suggest ways to tell the parks' stories to visitors.
3. The Division will provide funding to encourage parks to offer interpretive and educational programs to visitors and community groups, curriculum-based educational programs to schoolchildren, and to develop interpretive plans at each park.



Antelope Island State Park



Iron Mission State Park Museum

Objective 4: Provide organized and efficient public safety services at division locations and at off-park boating and off-highway vehicle areas to meet the needs of the public, State and Division.

Strategies to achieve Objective 4:

1. Establish a law enforcement coordinator position to organize and coordinate all division law enforcement efforts, and develop a statewide law enforcement plan for the Division.

GOAL 3

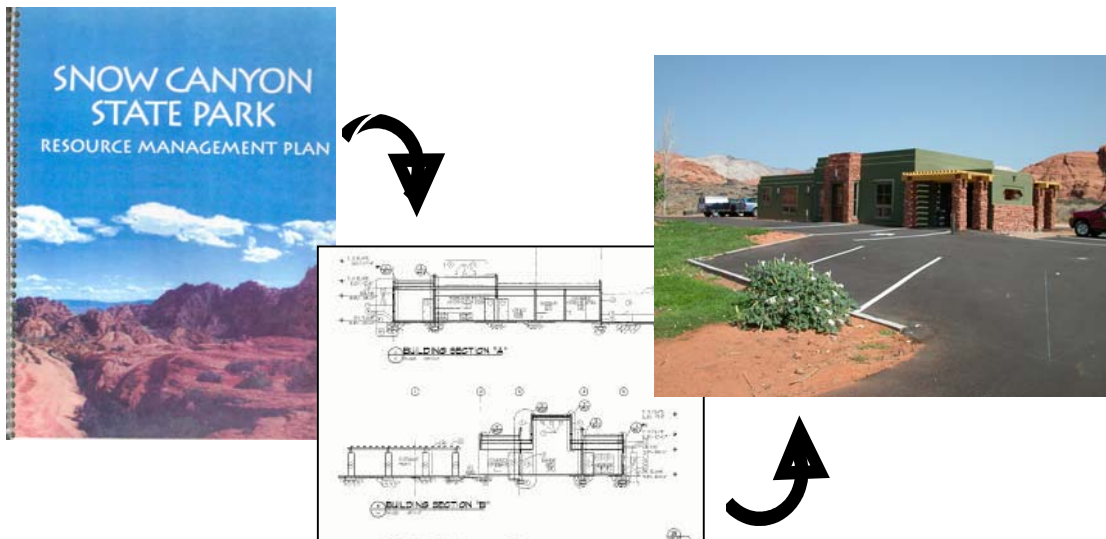
The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will protect, preserve, and appropriately enhance and expand Utah's recreational estate.

As the recreation authority for the state, the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation holds a public trust to care for state park properties in balance with meeting the needs of the recreating public. To accomplish this, the Division must have plans in place for wise resource and visitor management and must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission. The Division will seek partnerships with other recreation providers to ensure there are adequate recreational opportunities for a more diverse and growing population.

Objective 1: Provide park managers with the management tools they need to properly balance protection and use of park resources.

Strategies to achieve Objective 1:

1. Complete Resource Management Plans (RMP) for all Utah state parks. RMPs are comprehensive planning documents that help park managers determine how to best provide desired recreation opportunities while protecting each park's natural, cultural and historic resources. RMPs identify park resources, issues and needs, and provide clear and concise objectives for managers to use when making resource management decisions. Planning teams comprised of park managers, resource experts, park users, community leaders, and other stakeholders develop these plans.
2. Implement a process for managers to use to evaluate potential impacts on park resources from proposed special-use activities, and planning/development projects. Park Managers frequently receive requests for special-use activities, such as commercial filming and athletic events. These managers need specific guidelines to help evaluate the impact from these activities, as well as impacts from potential development projects.
3. Improve access to important information by creating an electronic catalog and database of important documents, such as deeds, titles, maps, plates, as-built drawings, and agreements, to allow managers and others easy access to this information. This recommendation will help park managers resolve resource and facilities management problems in a more efficient manner.



Objective 2: Secure adequate funding to allow for effective stewardship of parks and programs.



Bridge Construction – Mormon Trail–
East Canyon State Park

Strategies to achieve Objective 2:

1. Restore \$5 million in division capital development funds cut to help cover state revenue shortfalls in 2001.
2. Work with the legislature to continue to secure annual funding to maximize matching grant opportunities from federal programs, such as Bureau of Reclamation renovation funds and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. These matching grants help to renovate existing facilities and develop new ones.
3. Develop strong relationships with partners and stakeholders (general public, community leaders, Division of Facilities Construction and Management, user groups, concessionaires, legislature, and local, state and federal agencies) to build support for division operations and programs.
4. Ensure that all new parks or facilities meet the standards for new development as outlined in the Division's *Park Site Evaluation System*, and in addition to development monies, are funded adequately for future operation. New facilities are frequently added to the state park system without adequate operational funding, or without adequate study to determine suitability for state park status. This dilutes existing funding and makes it more difficult to properly operate parks and programs already in the system. Proposed parks or facilities must include adequate and on-going operational funding.
5. Prioritize development projects based on their ability to improve services and opportunities for visitors, enhance operational efficiency, increase revenue with minimal impact on operation, and improve facilities to meet public health and safety standards.
6. Restore funding to the non-motorized recreational trails program by developing a coalition of stakeholders to educate elected officials about the benefits of this matching grants program to communities and trail users. Expand the role of the program coordinator to coordinate trail system development statewide and to offer trail development expertise to communities and agencies.
7. Identify and seek new sources of continuous, ongoing funding to ensure necessary support of park operations and maintenance, division statewide programs, and capital improvement and development projects. Developing an enduring funding source would allow the Division to better plan for, and meet Utah's recreational needs.

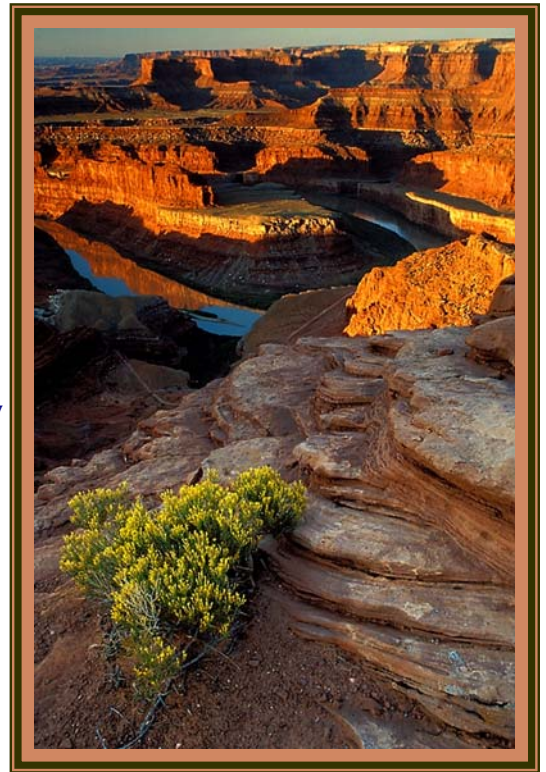


Boat Ramp Extension – Scofield State Park

Objective 3: Appropriately enhance and expand Utah's recreational estate.

Strategies to achieve Objective 3:

1. Enhance and expand Utah's recreational estate to accommodate the needs of a more diverse and expanding population through appropriate growth in the state park system, and by providing cooperation and support to other recreation providers. Utah's population is expected to grow by 700,000 people during the next ten years and become much more ethnically diverse.
2. The Division will determine the most pressing recreational needs in the state, and will establish where State Parks can appropriately help fill those needs.
3. Identify sections of the population that are not currently being reached by Utah State Parks and determine if there are park appropriate activities and experiences that can be offered to serve these groups. Park managers will also be encouraged to consider providing non-traditional development and activities at their parks to reach these groups, but only if the activities do not damage park resources or diminish existing visitor experiences.



Dead Horse Point State Park –by Mark Rasmussen – Winner of Reserve America's My State Park Photos Contest



Youth Off-highway Vehicle Training Course – sponsored by Utah State Parks

4. Adequately plan for the increasing numbers of off-highway vehicle owners and their recreation needs.

GOAL 4

The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation will recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled and committed workforce within Utah State Parks.

To be successful, the Division must retain a well-trained workforce that is committed to providing the best possible service to all its customers. In recent times, the Division has had difficulty in attracting and retaining new employees. The Division realizes that its employees are an important resource. Accordingly, significant investments are made for employee training and acquisition of requisite skills and knowledge. Employees need to be fairly compensated and given a reasonable workload for retention. They should be recognized for good performance.



Lake Powell

Objective 1: Develop employees' skills through regular training, work performance contracts, communication and coordination.

Strategies to achieve Objective 1:

1. Improve employees' job skills by providing regular job-appropriate training and employee mentoring.
2. Develop a plan for sharing important information with employees at all levels of the Division.
3. Outline and communicate career paths for all employees.
4. Use employee performance contracts to clearly express expectations of supervisors and employees.

Objective 2: Provide adequate and competitive compensation to employees to improve recruitment and retention.

Strategies to achieve Objective 2:

1. Ensure that division employees are compensated at levels that are adequate for their duties and workload, consistent with similar positions in other agencies within Utah government, and comparable positions in other states competing for workers.

Objective 3: Determine staffing levels necessary to operate each park and section adequately and efficiently.

Strategies to achieve Objective 3:

1. Develop staffing plans that identify the number and types of staff necessary to operate the parks and sections adequately and efficiently.

Objective 4: Improve overall satisfaction levels of all employees to improve performance and employee retention.

Strategies to achieve Objective 4:

1. Identify and correct causes contributing to low morale and job dissatisfaction of employees.
2. Fund and implement an employee recognition and incentive program to reward good work.



Kodachrome Basin State Park

"In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous."

-Aristotle



Iron Mission State Park Museum

Conclusion

This plan is a blueprint to help the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation achieve its mission and vision of improving the quality of life in Utah. The Division provides outdoor recreation to the public by operating a system of 41 state parks, and by offering financial and technical assistance to other local, state and federal recreation providers. The elements in this plan clearly define the Division's role as the state's recreation authority and offer strategies to protect division resources and improve recreation opportunities for the state's citizens and visitors. This plan also supports the growth of the recreation estate to accommodate a larger and more diverse population. It will help to ensure the Division has adequate funding to care for the resources entrusted to it. Finally, the plan allows for continued Division support of other recreation providers, and will create new partnerships to provide additional facilities and opportunities outside of state parks.

The Division recognizes that to be successful in meeting its responsibilities, it will need to recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled and committed workforce. This plan offers strategies to improve recruitment, retention and morale of division employees.

Utah State Parks is committed to fulfilling its mission. To do this, the Division will implement the strategies identified in this document by developing a work plan with specific, time-dependent measures to be completed by division employees, the governing board, and citizen advisory councils.



World Cup Biathlon at Soldier Hollow – site of the 2002 Winter Olympic
Nordic skiing events - Wasatch Mountain State Park

***"It is only in adventure that some people succeed in
knowing themselves – in finding themselves."***

- André Gide

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Huntington State Park

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